

the kid who was there by DreamersMyth27

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Summary:

Nancy is suddenly the only witness to her baby brother's abduction. At the age of five, it's all very scary. Now that she's sixteen, she's used to having people call her 'the girl who saw her brother kidnapped' or 'the kid who was there'.

the kid who was there

Author's Note:

So, I don't know where this idea came from really. I haven't been super into the Stranger Things fandom lately, but somehow this came about. I hope you guys enjoy! I'd love to hear thoughts on it too!

Nancy still remembers the day her brother went missing. Went missing, not died, because he's not dead. She'd only been five, sitting in the hospital waiting room while her parents were in a room getting her brother checked over.

He'd come down with a nasty case of the flu. At his age, their parents brought him into the hospital, just to be safe. The next thing Nancy knows is that they've been there for a few hours and her mom has come out a few times to tell her Mike is getting sicker.

Late that night, a nurse carries her brother out. She sees the nurse do this. Her brother is crying and screaming and very much alive. She's only five, so she doesn't do anything. A few minutes later her mom and dad come back with sad faces telling her that Mike died.

She tells them she saw a nurse bring Mike out of the hospital crying, wrapped in that quilt her grandma gave him. Her parents don't believe her at first until they ask to see the body. At that point, the whole hospital realizes something is wrong.

Nancy is suddenly the only witness to her baby brother's abduction. At the age of five, it's all very scary. Now that she's sixteen, she's used to having people call her 'the girl who saw her brother kidnapped' or 'the kid who was there'.

By now, Nancy knows chances of finding Mike are low. So do both of her parents. They've since had another kid, Holly, her little sister. Nancy is fiercely protective of Holly. Everyone in her family is, even her dad. They don't go to the hospital unless necessary, and when they do, all of them go together, never leaving sight for more than a moment or two. Holly is even born at home because her mom and

dad are scared someone might take her.

If there's anything Nancy still does hope, it's that if Mike is still alive, he's loved.

Then the November of her sophomore year, Barb goes missing from a party. It's strangely reminiscent of when Mike went missing and Nancy feels like she might have a breakdown. The only people who seem to know anything are a bunch of middle schoolers who come up to her two mornings after Barbara is reported missing.

"Are you Nancy?" one asks, a kid with a lisp and no front teeth. Standing behind him are two other boys, one tall with curly hair and a bandana around his forehead and the other short, with big sad eyes and a bull cut.

"Yes," she says hesitantly. "Who are you."

"I'm Dustin. That's Lucas and Will." Dustin hesitates until Lucas elbows him in the side, hard. "Ow. Okay, okay. Do you know anyone named Mike?"

Nancy is floored. Her breath catches. "W-what?" she asks.

"Mike," Lucas says.

Nancy nods slowly. "He was... he was my little brother. Someone kidnapped him when he was one. He'd be twelve now."

All three boys share looks, meaningful looks.

"What's going on?" she asks. "What do you three know?"

"Well, you see," Dustin begins, stopping and losing his nerve.

"There's a boy named Mike hiding in Will's room. We found him in the woods. He doesn't talk much, but he kept saying Nancy Wheeler, so we found you," Lucas explains quickly.

"Bring me there, now," Nancy demands.

"But school-"

"I don't care about school," Nancy says harshly to Will, feeling bad almost immediately. "Listen, I was the last person who saw him and I thought it was a nurse who carried him out of the hospital. I need to see him if it is him. I'll drive us to your house, Will."

"Okay," Will says. "There's also a girl with him. Her name is... El. She doesn't talk at all. But her and Mike like, they talk to each other somehow. Mike says to tell you about someone named Barb. She's the girl who disappeared."

"Barb?" Nancy breaths. "We need to hurry."

About fifteen minutes and a few broken driving rules later, Nancy is pulling up to Will Byers house. It's nowhere near any other house, kind of in the middle of the woods, and creepy as hell.

Nancy jumps out of the driver's seat and slams the door closed behind her, running towards the house, not looking to see if Lucas, Dustin, and Will are following her. She arrives at the front door, puts her hand on the door handle, then freezes. She can't bring herself to open it, because what are the chances this boy calling himself Mike is her brother? What are the chances that he actually knows something about Barbara?

But then her reservations are pushed aside when boys catch up to her and the door swings open. Standing there is a girl, with wide brown eyes, a shaved head, and a few freckles. She's wearing a slightly too large dress and a big, brown sweater.

The girl meets the boy's eyes from where they're standing behind her, then she looks up at Nancy.

"Mike's sister," the girl says, amazingly serious.

Behind her, she hears the boys gasp.

"She talked," Dustin says excitedly. "El, you talked!"

The girl, El, Nancy remembers, gives Dustin a small smile. Then, suddenly, from behind El, a boy appears. He's tall, thin, with almost shoulder length curly hair and a big nose. He looks just like how she imagined he would, but he's so much bigger now.

"Nancy," the boy says, looking up at her with wide, innocent eyes. Then he moves forward almost before she can blink and wraps his arms around her middle in a hug. "You're here."

"Mike?" she asks. "It's really you?"

The boy nods against her shoulder.

"We think that they came from the Hawkin's National Laboratory," Will pipes up from behind her. "Like, as experiments or something. El can... move things, with her mind. And Mike, well... we don't know."

Mike removes his arms from around her.

"See things," he says, slowly, stilted, as if he's unsure of if his words are being used properly. That breaks Nancy's heart. "I see things that happen later or before." That... doesn't really clear anything up, but she'll take. "Sometimes I see things in people's heads. Not real things."

"I think I need to know exactly what's going on," Nancy says firmly, turning to look back at Lucas, Dustin, and Will.

"Later," Mike says. "Later, Nancy. El, she sees Barb. In danger. The... the..." Mike stops and looks at Will.

"Demogorgon," Will supplies helpfully. "And the Upside-Down."

"Demogorgon is after her in the Upside-Down," Mike finishes.

"The what?" Nancy asks.

"The Upside-Down," Dustin says. "It's like an alternate dimension, our world but not. Monsters live there and one took Barb there. She's still alive though. El can hear her? See her? We're not sure."

"So, Mike and El, they were kidnapped by the government?" Nancy asks.

Mike and El nod solemnly alongside the three boys. Somehow, in all of this, they've ended up in the living room instead of on the porch outside.

"Bad men," El says.

"I saw them take me," Mike says, brow furrowed. "From when I was small. I saw it in my head. You were there," he tells Nancy seriously. His words are still slow, and she finds herself wondering if he only recently learned to talk. "But you were little. I was too. I heard one of the bad men think your name."

Nancy drops onto the couch and puts her hands in her head. This is all her fault. It's her fault they took Mike and it's her fault they did who knows what to him and it's her fault he's been abused.

Mike taps her shoulder, but before she can look up at him she hears his voice, not as unsure or stilted. It echoes inside her head, telling her: "Not your fault, Nancy. You were little. I was little."

Nancy looks up in shock because she knows that his talking wasn't out loud. Mike is sitting next to her, brow furrowed. He smiles slightly when she looks at him though. Nancy turns sharply to look at Lucas, Dustin, and Will, who are sitting on the floor in front of her.

"He did it to you?" Lucas asks.

Nancy nods mutely.

"We think when they're talking, we think when he 'sees things', we think he sees the past and the future," Will says slowly. "And when he sees things in people's heads we think he means mind-reading. We figure... well, we figure him and El talk like that most of the time, right, Mike?"

"Yes," Mike says. "It's... better. It made it easy to escape. To hide and find safe people. Will. Lucas. Dustin. They are safe. Not bad, like Brenner."

"Brenner?" Nancy asks.

"Dr. Brenner is the man in charge there," Dustin supplies helpfully. "We think he's the one who took them and, well, show her, Mike."

And Mike holds out his wrist to her, flipping it palm up. Tattooed is a small number in neat, black letters. 10.

"What's that?" She's horrified. This is monstrous. How could they do this? How could the government be okay with this?

Mike points at himself slowly and deliberately. "Me." Then he points at El. "Eleven."

The girl holds out her own wrist, pulling the sleeve of her sweater up and showing a small eleven tattooed on her.

"I know my name, real one because I saw it in a man's head," Mike says slowly. "I don't know El's."

"Does El know her's?" Nancy finds herself asking, turning towards the girl in question again.

El shakes her head. "Mike... could not find. Looked though. For sister too."

"Sister?" Nancy finds herself asking. She's been asking a lot of questions lately. She feels like she's playing catch-up running a race. Everyone else is ahead and she's working extra hard to catch up.

"Eight," Mike says. "Our sister. She was there and then she ran."

Nancy swallows the bile in her throat. It's only just occurring to her that if there are children called eleven, eight, and ten, then there are more. Who knows how many more? Maybe hundreds or even thousands. All being experimented on by her own government.

"She's your sister," Nancy says slowly. Okay, she can handle this. Just stay calm, she reminds herself. "Like I am?"

"Not like you," Mike says. "She has different people. But she's our sister now. Like how." Mike pauses and seems to be wracking his brain for the right words. This is just... her brother doesn't even have basic English skills because of them. "El has different people than me but she's my sister. I have different people than El, but she's my sister."

"Mike is my brother," El agrees, nodding slowly. "Eight is my sister."

And it hits Nancy what they mean. They only had each other. They

are each other's family. In the only way they know how to say it, they are family.

"Yes," Mike says softly in response to her thoughts. "Family."

Nancy closes her eyes, takes a deep breath, then opens her eyes again.

"Okay, guys. We've got our work cut out for us. We've got a government lab to shut down and we need to save Barb," she says firmly.

"And we're helping," Lucas says, just as firmly. "You can't say no to us."

"We'll need help."

"Jonathan," Mike says. "Steve. They will help."

"Let's get to work," Nancy says, swallowing her nerves.

Author's Note:

My [Tumblr](#).